

the
Connection

Easter 2018



Mass Times

St Nicholas' Church, Carrickfergus
Vigil Mass Saturday 6:00pm, Sunday 11:30am
Tuesday and Thursday 10:00am

Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Whitehead
Sunday 9:30am
Monday and Wednesday 10:00am

Confessions

Carrickfergus: Saturday 5:30pm to 5:50pm
Whitehead: Sunday morning before Mass

Eucharistic Adoration

Carrickfergus: Saturday 10:00am to 5:00pm,
Tuesday and Thursday 10:30am to 10:45pm
Whitehead: Monday and Wednesday 10:30am to 10:45am

Baptisms

Carrickfergus: 3rd Sunday in the month
Whitehead: 1st Sunday in the month
One month's notice is required.

Weddings

By arrangement. Three months' notice is required.



CARRICKFERGUS
P A R I S H

Parish Priest: Father Peter Owens

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Easter Message



Each Christmas and Easter, Father Owens, our Parish priest, writes a special message to the Parish reflecting on the two most important times of the church's year. Due to personal circumstances, Father Owens cannot be with us this year. We wish him well and pray for him and his family. In Father Owens' Easter message last year, he warmly thanked all those parishioners who contributed to the spiritual, liturgical and social spheres of our Parish. His words were, "This is a faith community that is active, vital, engaged and welcoming."

Over the past year the parishioners of Carrickfergus and Whitehead have indeed continued to give of their time and generosity to support our Priest and have worked together to build up our community.

Our recent welcome days which were held in both Carrickfergus and Whitehead saw the great work which is done voluntarily by the many Parish groups that portray the welcoming, friendly, energised and committed Parish that this is.

With heartfelt gratitude, we also thank the holy army of musicians, welcomers, altar servers, sacristans religious educators, Ministers of the Word, Eucharistic Ministers and the many "workers" for their dedicated and loving service to our Parish. We are very grateful to the Communication Committee and the contributors of 'The Connection'. We are indeed blessed with such selfless and loving followers of Christ.

Over the past weeks, Father Sheehan, the Vicar Forane for Our Pastoral Community, has provided clerical support to our Parish. We would like to express our thanks to him, Father Cushnane and all the priests that have found their way to Mount Saint Nicholas' and Our Lady of Lourdes churches.

Easter brings so many promises of God to us; life is stronger than death, love can overcome hate, and eternity and glory with God in Heaven are our destiny. On behalf of Father Owens, we pray that you and your families and loved ones will have a blessed and hope-filled Easter. God bless each and every one of you.

Peace, love and joy this Easter.

Our Singing & Altar Serving Sports Stars!

It should come as no surprise that we have a lot of talent in the parish. This is just a taste of the sporting success enjoyed by some of our young people who sing in the choir and help Fr Peter on the altar each week.

Tara Gilmore who plays for Carnmoney Ladies Football Club won the Linfield Ladies under 13s tournament shield last month.



Kerry Gilmore who dances for Ballynafeigh School of Irish Dancing was placed second in her trebles and third in the reel at the recent 2017 Ulster Championships.



Aoife Harkin who also dances for Ballynafeigh won two 2nd places at her very first festival with the School this year.



Jack Ireland plays football for Whitehead Eagles and St Nicholas' Primary School, as well as running for the school Cross Country team.





Joshua Houston recently became Junior Champion of the Ulster Model Car Club racing circuit.



Oliver Wilson plays Gaelic Football for St Pauls, and soccer for Glentoran 08s with whom he recently reached the final of the Foyle Cup.



And sister **Eva Wilson** also plays Gaelic Football for St Paul's in Hollywood and is currently building up her running to enter her very first Park Run.



Reuben Clarke with his skills award from Ulster Rugby Summer Camp.

Baptisms

Over the past year, 20 children have been baptised in Carrickfergus and 6 have been baptised in Whitehead. These are just a few of those who have been welcomed into the parish in recent months:



Conor Hugh McColgan was baptised at St Nicholas' on 18th June 2017. Parents Catherine and Greg were joined by family, friends and Conor's older brothers Cain, Aimee and Eoin in celebrating their special day.



Jack Yohanis was baptised at St Nicholas' on 20th August 2017. Parents Ashleigh and Dilan celebrated with family and friends, including grandparents Charlie and Bernadette Livingstone.



Grace Mary Bridget Corey was baptised at St Nicolas' on 15th November 2017. Parents Orla and Ciaran enjoyed celebrating the baptism of their daughter with Grace's older brothers Alfie and Odhrán and lots of family and friends from the Carrickfergus area.



Baptisms take place on the first Sunday of the month in Whitehead and the third Sunday of the month in Carrickfergus. To make arrangements for a baptism please contact **Natalie** at the Church Office on **028 9336 3269**.

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Parish Welcome Days

During the month of February, not long after the beginning of Lent, the Parish Pastoral Council hosted two Welcome Days to give members of the 30 groups, committees, societies and clubs in our Parish the opportunity to showcase their activities and the work they do to other parishioners. These took place after Sunday Masses on 18th February in St Nicholas' Primary School and Parish Hall in Carrickfergus; and on the 25th of the month in Lourdes Pastoral Centre in Whitehead.



Many parishioners, of all ages and from all parts of the Parish came to these events despite less than pleasant weather conditions, although we were quickly warmed up by tea and coffee provided by the hospitality team. There was a great atmosphere around the halls as people moved from one stall to another, finding out more about the many different areas of Parish life and chatting to each other.





Being able to see the multitude of ways in which people put their own various gifts and talents to use in our Parish very much brought to mind St Paul's words in his first letter to the Corinthians. "God put all the separate parts into the body on purpose. If all the parts were the same, how could it be a body? As it is, the parts are many, but the body is one. (...) Now you together are Christ's body; but each of you is a different part of it."



All of our groups are, in one way or another, directed towards living out the corporal and spiritual works of mercy recognised by the Church, and bringing Christ's love into the world. They also play a huge role in the realisation of our Parish Pastoral Plan, recently launched by Bishop Tremain, which will further unfold over the next three years.

Some of our groups and committees also attracted new members at these Welcome Days, although they would be **delighted to welcome newcomers all year round**. If you feel called to use your talents in a new way in the Parish, there's a group for you!

Article by David Gorman

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St Nicholas' Primary School

The Communication Committee was very pleased to announce a competition to design a cover for the Easter edition of the Connection magazine this year. The theme was to show a scene from the Easter story and the competition was open to all St. Nicholas' Primary School pupils. The children's work was all fantastic making it very hard but enjoyable to judge!



1st : Tasha Teague

A wonderfully depicted scene using lovely pastel colours, excellent leaf designs and a superbly drawn Jesus, this is a well deserved winner! Congratulations!

2nd : Ellie Kane

Eye catching colours and fantastic storytelling, this was a very close runner up! The blazing sun in the corner is a very nice touch.



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3rd : Ruby Galvin

A perfect, simplistic design with complimentary colours. We love how the artist also thought of the book's layout and text, with a clever typography design as the letter T becomes a cross. They have basically done all the work for us!

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Gerardine and Patrick Stewart

Gerardine and Patrick Stewart, as pictured with Patrick's mother, Mrs. Stewart, at the St. Vincent De Paul Christmas dinner, have been the backbone of Our Lady Of Lourdes Church, Whitehead, for many years.



Article by Joanne Campbell (nee Shaw)



They were married in 1987 and Gerardine began by cleaning the Church with other ladies from the Parish. As their three children progressed through school, they have taken on the organisation of many Church activities. The Stewarts have co-ordinated and participated with the local St. Vincent De Paul branch, Eucharistic Ministers, guest speakers,

Church readers, lifts for the sick, the Children's Liturgy, the Altar servers and collections during Mass, amongst other services. Their tireless contribution to Our Lady Of Lourdes Church and the welcome they have given new Parishioners, should be applauded.

Patrick can also be seen here (left) presenting a bouquet of flowers to Janet Crampsey after 21 years of volunteering her services to Whitehead SVP.



In the picture, Maureen McLaughlin who also recently stood down. Maureen and Janet were the founder members of the Whitehead group over 21 years ago. Others SVP volunteers are Paddy Stewart, Maura Rodgers, Marion McHugh, Eileen Vance and missing is Susan Maxwell who couldn't make it on the night.

Trôcaire



This year our Trócaire box tells the story of Kumba, a seven-year-old girl from Sierra Leone. The campaign was launched only six months after a devastating mudslide that destroyed her home and killed over 1,000 people in the area of Freetown where she lives. Only 20% of her community survived.

On launching the Lenten campaign, Eamonn Meehan, Trócaire's executive Director warned that growing numbers of people are being trapped in humanitarian crises. "At the age of just seven, Kumba has already survived an Ebola outbreak that killed 4,000 people and a mudslide that killed 1,000 people," he said. "Her young life has been spent in an almost constant state of crisis. Tragically, she is far from alone. A seven-year-old in Syria has never known peace; a seven-year-old in Gaza has survived two separate wars; a seven-year-old in South Sudan has experienced both famine and civil war in their short life. "The Lenten campaign comes at a time when conflict in many parts of the world has left millions of people at risk of famine and disease.

"The work Trócaire does promoting human rights, women's empowerment and access to resources such as land and water is key to building strong and peaceful societies. That work is powered by our annual Lenten appeal. We will use donations to our campaign to support over two million of the poorest and most vulnerable people around the world this year.

"We are incredibly grateful for the support we receive from parishes, schools and families all over Ireland, without whom this work would not be possible."



World Meeting of Families 2018

Dublin, Ireland, has been chosen by Pope Francis to host the next World Meeting of Families from 21-26 August 2018, guided by the theme "The Gospel of the Family: Joy for the World".



Held every three years, this major international event brings together families from across the world to celebrate, pray and reflect upon the central importance of marriage and the family as the cornerstone of our lives, of society and of the Church.

All parishes in Ireland have been invited to get involve in the World Meeting of Families this year. Over the next few months our Pastoral Council will be encouraging parishioners to get involved in the preparation for the big week in August!

OFFICIAL FAMILY PRAYER FOR WORLD MEETING OF FAMILIES 2018



God, our Father,

We are brothers and sisters in Jesus your Son,

One family, in the Spirit of your love.

Bless us with the joy of love.

Make us patient and kind,

gentle and generous,

welcoming to those in need.

Help us to live your forgiveness and peace.

Protect all families with your loving care,

Especially those for whom we now pray:

[We pause and remember family members and others by name].

Increase our faith,

Strengthen our hope,

Keep us safe in your love,

Make us always grateful for the gift of life that we share.

This we ask, through Christ our Lord,

Amen

Mary, mother and guide, pray for us.

Saint Joseph, father and protector, pray for us.

Saints Joachim and Anne, pray for us.

Saints Louis and Zélie Martin, pray for us.

Stitch by Stitch

The Parish Craft Group continue to meet on the last Thursday of the month in Lourdes Pastoral Centre from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm. This is a very sociable evening when the focus is more on catching up with friends- old and new- young and ...older- rather than comparing craft skills!



However, there is always someone on hand prepared to share their skills and talents with anyone who wants to try something new- a few of us are trying our hands at crocheting this month.

We have recently got in touch with Loving Hands Carrickfergus, a large craft group who send parcels of hand crafted hats, toys etc out to Batti in Gambia. We are now collaborating with them and have started creating some of these "dude dolls" to be sent out to the children for next Christmas. We will also be starting to create some "Woodland creatures" for Whitehead's Woollen Woods family day in June.



Of course we have not forgotten about our own Parishioners and work is still on-going for the small gifts that Father Peter gives out to the sick and the housebound.

Everyone is most welcome to join us - whether they can knit, crochet or not. Maybe you have some ideas for future projects. Why not come along on the last Thursday of the month?



Produced by the Parish Communications Committee:

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